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Twenty-third special session

Letter dated 12 June 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to attach a copy of the Joint Declaration of the member States of MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile relating to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly "Women 2000: Gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" (see annex).

The Governments of the countries in the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) and the Governments of Bolivia and Chile would be grateful if you would arrange for it to be issued as a document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and circulate it to delegations, as requested by the Head of the Argentine delegation at the last plenary meeting.

(*Signed*) Ambassador Arnoldo **Listre**
Permanent Representative
Acting President of MERCOSUR

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Annex to the letter dated 12 June 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

MERCOSUR and associated countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay)

Commitment to continue developing a common agenda

The representatives of the Governments of the member countries of MERCOSUR (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) and of the associated countries (Bolivia and Chile) attending the twenty-third special session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",

Considering that human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent; reaffirming our countries' record in the matter of the promotion, recognition and observance of women's rights at the national, regional and universal levels; reiterating our commitment to the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action adopted in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women; expressing our agreement with the position stated by 15 Latin American countries meeting here in their Declaration of today's date;

Have used the opportunity provided by this meeting to confirm the shared values and interests of the members and associate members of MERCOSUR favouring gender equality and equity, particularly in the case of any form of discrimination and violence, and have agreed to continue to engage in concerted cooperation activities on the basis of a common agenda including *inter alia* the following items:

- Growth of our societies based on equality between women and men in social, political, economic and cultural life, in accordance with a concept of citizenship that expands the rights of women, guarantees their exercise in order to overcome gender inequities and affirms the shared responsibility of women and men;
- Development of leadership programmes for women in various areas, enabling them to progress towards real inclusion in public life;
- Encouragement of active policies to transform new technologies into new opportunities for the development of women in conditions of equality;
- Adoption of compatible legislation and statistical indicators and of regulations in accordance with the Convention of Belém do Pará on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women.

For this purpose, we shall encourage and strengthen horizontal cooperation through the transfer and exchange of experiences and programmes which focus on women as true social actors in public and private life and shall continue to develop at the subregional level the machinery for regular consultations, particularly the special meeting on women in MERCOSUR, designed to enable us to progress towards real gender equality.

New York, 9 June 2000

Argentina: Enrique Candioti

Bolivia: Yarmila Moravek de Cerruto

Brazil: Benoni Belli

Chile: Adriana Delpiano

Paraguay: Cristina Munoz

Uruguay: Alba E. Osores de Lanza